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Synopses of Important Articles.

ST. PAUL'S CONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY: XIV. THE FLESH AS A HINDRANCE TO HOLINESS. By REV. PROFESSOR A. B. BRUCE, D.D., in *The Expositor*, March, 1894. Pp. 189-203.

The "flesh" in the Pauline Epistles is substantially the "stubborn resistance offered by a power residing in the flesh to the attainment of that entire holiness after which every sincere Christian earnestly aspires." This resistance goes on *before* regeneration, but is carried on with a better hope of success *after* conversion. The Apostle's insight into the nature and varied manifestations of the "flesh" comes from his own experience; for the expression "I buffet my body" tells that Paul had his desperate struggles with the common forms of temptation. There is no evidence that Paul theorized on the nature of the flesh in any Philonic style; on the other hand, he would have regarded such metaphysical speculation with aversion and disfavor. For (1) the theory that matter or flesh is essentially evil is decidedly *un-Hebrew*, and Paul is a Hebrew of the Hebrews; (2) the Pauline Epistles do not regard the flesh as unsanctifiable, cf. 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 2 Cor. 7:1; (3) the eschatology of Paul is against such a notion, for the life after death is not pictured as a disembodied one, cf. Rom. 5:12; 8:21-23; 7:14.

On the other hand, Paul did not teach that the "flesh" is simply a creaturely weakness as opposed to Divine Power, without any necessary connotation of sin. The "flesh" seems to have become to the Apostle a term of intensely sinister import. The "flesh" seems to be a *tertium quid*, something intermediate between Hellenism and Hebrewism, the creation of a very intense religious experience.

Dr. Bruce's articles have the excellent effect of showing how Revelation is, partly at least, an interpretation of the religious consciousness. Very much of Paul's teaching seems to be merely holding a mirror up to nature. C. E. W.

ST. PAUL'S CONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY. XV. THE LIKENESS OF SINFUL FLESH. By REV. PROFESSOR A. B. BRUCE, D.D., in *The Expositor*. April, 1894. Pp. 265-75.

The discussion of *Romans* 8:3 raises some questions having an important bearing on the Pauline doctrine of the flesh. Was Christ's flesh, in the Apostle's view, in all respects, the same as ours? Could the epithet "sinful" be literally applied to His flesh? To the Apostle, the expression, "sinful flesh" had assumed the character of a single indissoluble idea, at least with reference to ordinary men. But with reference to Christ, all that he can

say he says in this text, viz., that Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh to the extent of being subject to every real temptation to sin and all that may involve. The text does not answer the question suggested. The question was evidently a puzzle even to Paul. Properly speaking, the flesh as such is in no case bad. It is the inversion of the right relation between flesh and spirit that is sin. If, as the Apostle says, it is possible for Christians to have a moral triumph over temptation, it was possible *a fortiori* in Christ even in a flesh in all respects like ours. Christ's holy life in the flesh shows that for men living in the flesh bondage to sin is not the natural and inevitable state. Jesus walked in the spirit while in the flesh, and to those who believe in Him God will communicate His Spirit to enable them to do the same. And the culmination of Christ's victorious life in the Spirit in a resurrection into pneumatic manhood from which all gross fleshliness has disappeared, gives us a sure ground of hope for the ultimate redemption of our body out of the natural into the spiritual, out of the corruptible into the incorruptible.

C. E. W.

ST. PAUL'S CONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY: XVI. THE LAW. By PROFESSOR A. B. BRUCE, D.D., in *The Expositor* for May, 1894. Pp. 342-355.

The positive side of Paul's doctrine of justification is that righteousness comes through the imputation of faith. This does not entail a reckless criticism of the Jewish law. The law had a real, vitally significant function, and the only question requiring reconsideration was, what is the true function of the law? Paul's answer to this query is well known. It may be asked, however: (1) Is the Pauline view of the law in accordance with the function assigned it in the Hebrew Scriptures? Dr. Baur replied in the negative. But Paul's position of justification by faith is that it best interprets the Hebrew Scriptures, and that he is in close touch with the spirit of the ancient worthies. The Apostle is fighting over again with certain of the Church the battle that he had already fought with himself concerning the true value and spirit of the law. Righteousness of the law means with him, the approval of God as Pharisaically conceived, which righteousness he had strenuously pursued until his conversion. The Judge of the Pharisaic creed is the god of mere justice, the Judge of St. Paul's creed is the god of grace. It may be asked (2) are the functions which St. Paul ascribes to the law real, and are they recognized in the Old Testament? The answer is self-evident that, as time went on, the Spirit-taught men of the Old Testament saw that the law was given, not so much for life and blessedness, as for the knowledge of sin and misery, and that if any good was to come to Israel, it must be through the supersession of the Sinaitic covenant by a new covenant of grace. The prophets were on Paul's side, even if Moses and Ezra seemed to be on the side of his opponents. And (3), does the account of the law's function given

in the anti-Judaistic Epistle need supplementing? On the ethical side, the Apostle's doctrine leaves nothing to be desired; but as to the ritual law, his view is not complete. It was left for the author of the Hebrews to expound the emblematic character of the Old Testament ritual. Such a typical interpretation of the law is hinted at, however, by Paul, showing that he had no contrary view, while, at the same time, having not quite reached the same revolutionary point of view.

Such a critical appreciation of the Apostle's point of view throws a flood of light on the Epistles, as well as on the successive steps in the history of the Apostolic Church.

C. E. W.

THE MOSES OF THE CRITICS. By PROFESSOR WILLIAM HENRY GREEN, in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for July, 1894. Pp. 389 to 397.

The question is if the critics are right, who and what was Moses? The accounts concerning him are contradictory and misleading. The books which, according to the ordinary view, present a full and definite statement concerning his life and work, are cut into pieces and made contradictory. He himself is denied all relationship to these books. The view of the critics denies the divine element in the Pentateuchal books "and dates are arbitrarily assigned to documents so remote from the events recorded as to make their testimony quite unreliable. The documents are arbitrarily represented to be variant and conflicting. One or the other of them must consequently be in error, and it is only by balancing one against the other that the real truth can be elicited from these discordant witnesses." The documents differ materially in their statements and thus give divergent representations of what took place; moreover, their aim "is not to present a simple record of facts as they actually took place, for the history has been warped, either unconsciously or designedly, in order to make it the vehicle of inculcating religious ideas."

If we take up the details of the history of Moses we find it impossible, upon the basis of the documents, to discover anything reliable. According to two documents God at first appeared to Moses in the burning bush, but another writer knows nothing of the residence of Moses in Midian, or of this vision. It is in Egypt, according to this writer, that God reveals himself to Moses. According to two writers God first revealed himself as Jehovah at this time; but according to another the name Jehovah had been used from the earliest days. According to one authority three miraculous signs were given to Moses in order to secure his influence with the people; according to another no signs were given him, but a miraculous rod was placed in his hand; according to another the rod was used only in the presence of Pharaoh and his magicians. In this conflict of testimony what is to be expected? According to Wellhausen there is lack of agreement in reference to the observance of the Passover. According to Dillmann there are four distinct accounts of the

passage of the Red Sea. According to Wellhausen, Israel never went to Sinai and no law was ever given there. Other critics who do not eliminate Mt. Sinai from Israel's history, nevertheless, reduce Moses' work of legislation to a minimum. Dillmann maintains that he wrote nothing; that his statutes were delivered orally; that he organized the worship and purified the religious ideas of the people and gave them organization, and that he left them no written book of law. According to Driver the teaching of Moses is to be found in the decalogue and in the Book of the Covenant. Most of the critics would have us believe that the tabernacle had no existence in the time to which it is assigned; that the priestly privileges were not limited to the family of Aaron until the Babylonian exile; that the law with respect to a central sanctuary was not in existence before the time of Josiah. The acceptance of these views naturally carries with it a denial of supernatural revelation. This leads to the denial of the testimony of Jesus Christ. If Moses had nothing to do with the narratives of the Pentateuch, what assurance have we of their truth? If we abandon Mosaic authorship, we are out upon the open sea with nothing to direct our course. Under such treatment the Mosaic history crumbles away. If this literary partition is accepted at all, there is no limit to it. "If the door be open even only a crack to admit it, all is at the mercy of what there is no means of controlling, and nothing can prevent the door being flung open as wide as the hinges will allow."

Professor Green is correct in asserting that the question at issue is more than one of literary form. The question is whether we shall accept (1) a purely supernatural theory of the origin of the Pentateuch, and consequently of the Old Testament religion—a theory which would make it purely objective and handed down as the Mohammedans understand the Koran to have been handed down, directly from the hand of God from heaven; or (2) the theory which goes to the other extreme, ruling out as it does the supernatural and making the religion and the history of Israel a purely naturalistic development; or (3) a conception which will on the one hand make full allowance for the supernatural element in the history and in the literature, and at the same time permit a gradual unfolding of the divine plan, and a growth from century to century of the plan and purpose of God in selecting Israel to be a teacher to the whole world. Professor Green would accept the first theory. His line of argument is directed most forcibly, and as it seems to us most convincingly against those who accept the second theory. He does not, however, seem to appreciate the position of those who adopt the third theory, and who believe as devoutly as he believes in the divine character of this material, while at the same time accepting the human element which is so evident at every step.

W. R. H.

EZEKIEL AND THE PRIESTS' CODE. By THOMAS WHITELAW, Kilmarnock, Scotland, in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for July, 1894. Pp. 437-453.

It is clear that either Ezekiel preceded the Priests' code, or the Priests' code preceded Ezekiel. In favor of the view that Ezekiel preceded the

Priests' code we are referred to (1) the circumstance that in his temple vision the prophet has incorporated a scriptural torah of his own instead of simply appropriating that of Moses. If Ezekiel was acquainted with the Mosaic law, why does he not content himself with a reference to it instead of giving instructions with respect to all the details of the service? But it cannot be shown that if Ezekiel had known the Mosaic torah he would have been obliged to incorporate it. He did not use it because he did not want to use it. He may be supposed to have known what he wanted better than a nineteenth century critic. It cannot be shown that Ezekiel's aim was to outline a new ritual for the restored theocracy at the close of the exile. His real object was by means of well known symbols to set forth views of divine truth for the consolation of his fellow exiles.

(2) The deviations of Ezekiel's torah from that of the Priests' code. Ezekiel, in the matter of worship, requires much less than Num. 28 and 29. Where is the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16)? What has become of the High Priest? In this and other matters the Priests' code is a development of Ezekiel's ideas. But (a) since Ezekiel is aiming merely to furnish his fellow exiles with a picture of the ideal worship, there was no reason why he should not appropriate as much or as little of the earlier torah as would be helpful to his purpose. (b) If he intended to propose a new scriptural rubric, and if he was guided by the same spirit that directed Moses, why should he not be allowed the liberty to take or leave of it precisely as that spirit led him? (c) If Ezekiel did not have the liberty to omit from the Priests' code (supposing it to have been the earlier) reference to a high priest, the great Day of atonement, etc., the author of the Priests' code, (assuming it to have been later), should not have felt himself at liberty to add these things, especially in view of the Deuteronomic admonition (Deut. 4 : 12; 12 : 32). If the Priests' code was not composed till after the exile, the Book of Ezekiel must have been known to its author. This author did not hesitate to make additions. It is not enough to say that the Priests' code is a "development," for development may proceed in the direction of diminishing dead rites rather than in that of multiplying. (d) In view of Ezekiel's closer affinity with the Priests' code than that of Deuteronomy, and of his divergences from Deuteronomy, why not suppose that Deuteronomy had no existence in the days of Ezekiel?

(3) The so-called degradation of the Levites (Ezek. 44 : 6-18) which shows that the distinction between priest and Levite was unknown until Ezekiel created it, the Deuteronomic code having been doubly ignorant of Levites who were not priests. But (a) it cannot be shown that the division between priests and Levites was unknown before the exile. The proposition that all Levites were priests and recognized as such in Deuteronomy and other pre-exilic books is not warranted by the evidence. The brief text of this proposition (Deut. 18 : 1) does not imply this, and besides an examination of Josh. 21 : 4; 3 : 3; Judges 17; I. Kings 8 : 14; Isa. 66 : 21, furnishes evidences that the distinction

was not unknown in other books. (c) The degradation referred to in 44:6-16 was of apostate priests and Levites who were unfaithful.

(4) The occurrence in the Priests' code of words belonging to the exilic and post-exilic era. The strength of this argument seems to rest upon the occurrence of the word "rakia" firmanent, which is found, outside of the Priests' code, Psa. 19:150 and Daniel 12, exclusively in Ezekiel. But why could not Ezekiel have borrowed it from the Priests' code or the Psalter? In general, inferences as to the relative age of Hebrew documents drawn from certain words or phrases, are precarious.

On the other hand it may be urged in favor of the belief that the Priests' code preceded Ezekiel's: (1) The fact that between Ezekiel and the Law of holiness (Lev. 17:2-26), which makes a considerable part of the Priests' code, the points of contact in respect to thought and expression are both numerous and striking. (2) The fact that in the Priests' code and even in the other portions of the Pentateuch, fragments longer or shorter, occur which belong to some class of writing as the Law of Holiness, and ought accordingly like it to be ascribed to the author or compiler of Lev. 26. Now if all these fragments were put together we should have almost a complete Leviticus, and if they emanated from the same author, that author being, according to Driver, a contemporary of Jeremiah, we might infer that the Priests' code was composed before Ezekiel. (3) It is easier to explain the deviations of Ezekiel's torah from that of the Priests' code on the assumption that this was the earlier, than to account for the divergences from the Priests' code of Ezekiel on the supposition that the latter enjoyed the precedence. (4) Ezekiel is evidently acquainted with the phraseology and the institutions of the Priests' code. The fact is accepted by critics who deny the inference which is deduced from it. There is therefore not sufficient ground for holding Ezekiel to have preceded the Priests' code, but good cause for believing that the Priests' code preceded Ezekiel.

This presentation is one well worthy of study. It is beyond dispute that the position of Ezekiel is a key to the whole Wellhausen controversy. It is in reference to the date of the Priests' code that the schools of Dillmann and Wellhausen differ radically. For our own part it seems quite clear that the Priests' code is earlier than Deuteronomy or Ezekiel. The archæological evidence which has lately been discovered makes this possible; the bulk of Old Testament material makes it probable. Dr. Whitelaw's contribution lays emphasis on points which, it would seem, the critics on the other side have not fully considered.

W. R. H.